

Your Brother Sam is Dead

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Author's Note: I'm very proud of this one, although the ending is tentative. I might write more with enough comments, but for right now it's a fairly good stopping point. Destiel, enjoy.

Your Brother Sam is Dead

The first time Dean Winchester mentioned Sam to his father, he was five years old.

The two sat in the kitchen, with Dean munching on his bowl of Lucky Charms in his typical silence. John was reading the paper, scanning the want ads for any mechanic positions he could fill.

Being a single dad was difficult, being one who was constantly out of work was harder. He had just managed to wean himself off the booze, after his friend Bobby's threat to take him to court for Dean had become more of a legitimate statement than a joke.

But for right now, John was sober, he saw several promising ads in the paper, and he had an apartment that was even fit for habitation.

So when Dean laughed, out-right laughed, before falling into a fit of giggles, John was extremely happy. He hadn't heard Dean laugh since the night of the fire.

"What so funny, little man?" He asked gently, his curiosity peaked. Dean looked up from his bowl, green eyes shining.

"Sammy can't figure out how to eat his cereal."

Sam sat in the highchair by the table, staring gloomily at the apple mush in front of him. When Dean sat next to him, his eyes lit up and he let out a happy baby gurgle.

_ "Heya, Sammy," Dean ruffled his baby brother's hair. "Eat your breakfast, kid. It's good for you."_

_ As if he understood, Sam dropped his gaze to his breakfast once more and gave a small 'no,' which was the only word he knew besides 'De.'_

_ "You have to," Dean chided, pointing his spoon at his brother. Sam made a grab for the brightly colored marshmallows instead, managing to tip the spoon to where the milk soaked cereal landed on his chubby tummy. He then proceeded to try and get the snack into his mouth by leaning his head forward, where he was stopped by the flat part of the high chair._

_ Dean watched Sammy wiggle around, his head still pressed against the table, before his little shoulders slumped and the one year old gave an irritated huff._

_ Dean couldn't help but laugh at his brother's antics._

S

Dean often wondered why they moved so much. Every time he tried to sneak Sammy into school (Sam, though four years Dean's junior, was incredibly smart), he was sent the principle, who had a long discussion with John. The words behind closed doors were often loud, and these discussions always ended with John bursting from the room angrily, telling Dean to pack his things, that this school wasn't good enough, and that the staff didn't know jack. Dean never asked, but he thought that this Jack person must be very important, to the point where he started asking his teachers if they knew him.

That day he had been trying to teach Sam about what he was learning in first grade. The teacher had talked about careers. Dean had decided that he wanted to be a fireman. When Mr. Harrell had asked why, Dean's throat did that thing it got too tight, and his lungs got too small to take a good breath. But then Sammy had taken his hand and he was okay.

"My brother Sam wants to be a lawyer," Dean had said.

"Oh? Why is that?"

"He likes arguing with people," Dean had shot a smirk at the teacher as he said this.

"Alright, Mr. Winchester. Thank you. What about you, Mr. Novak?"

And class continued, and Dean got bored. Eventually it was recess.

Dean pushed Sam on the swing as Sam demanded to go higher. Dean laughed and gave a weak shove, just to hear Sam start to whine, before pulling the seat back as hard as he could and letting go. Sam gave a shriek of delight.

_ "Excuse me," a small voice said. "May I play?"_

_ Dean turned to see a smaller boy with dark, messy hair staring up at him._

_ "Sure, when Sammy's done."_

_ "Who's Sam?"_

_ "He's my little brother."_

_ "That's nice. I only have big brothers, and only one is nice to me. But he's not around much."_

_ "Not all big brothers are bad."_

_ "Dean," Sam shouted, "I want down now."_

_ "Okay," Dean looked back at the boy. "Sammy's done if you want a turn now."_

_ "Thank you. Could you—could you push me too?" His big blue eyes pleaded. Dean nodded. _

_ "Sure. You're smaller than Sam anyway, so you should be easier to push."_

So when the boy got home, he told his father all about his new friends, Dean and Sam Winchester. His father was happy for him. He even offered to have them both over for a playdate.

John agreed, delighted that Dean had made a friend and seemed to be doing better in school. The dads exchanged manly handshakes while the boys ran off to play in the yard.

Then John heard the question, 'Where's Sam,' and had to explain.

So Dean was leaving again. He wondered why they moved so much, complaining that he and Sammy had liked school, had liked their friend, had liked the room they shared, and the neighborhood, and Sammy had liked playing with the neighbor's dog-

"Shut up, Dean! Shut up or I swear to God," John fumed. Dean promptly clamped his mouth shut.

He made sure that John couldn't see him cry. Sammy pretended not to see Dean's tears, which Dean appreciated.

Soon, Dean learned things:

1. People didn't like Sammy
2. Sammy had to be protected
3. The best way to do that was to make Sam a secret

These worked fairly well. Dean managed to make it fifth grade before he had another incident.

It was when John had left him with Uncle Bobby to babysit. He was supposed to be working on extra homework problems (the sixth grade kind, a whole grade ahead), when Bobby told him that they were going to go play catch instead.

"But won't Dad get mad?" Dean had questioned nervously. Bobby's face hardened before he sighed and ruffled Dean's hair.

"I'll make sure he won't, 'k sport?"

"Okay, Bobby." And Dean walked to the park with Bobby.

He had learned to throw and catch, and he and Bobby had gotten ice cream. Later, he was trying to convince Bobby to play tag with him.

"Please?" Dean clasped his hands and adopted a pleading expression.

"I'm a little old to be chasing after you, ya idjit."

Dean huffed and crossed his arms.

"Sammy could give you his big old puppy eyes and you'd do it," he grumbled.

"Sammy," Bobby questioned, alarmed.

Dean tensed, knowing he had said the wrong thing. Now Uncle Bobby would get mad and hate him just like everybody else.

Instead, Bobby kneeled down in front of him and clasped his shoulders gently.

"Does Sammy want to play tag, Dean?"

Dean nodded.

"Then we'll all play tag," Bobby said, and Dean smiled, because Bobby was great and he liked Sammy. To Dean that was the best thing in the world.

S

"He needs help, John," Bobby said calmly, and John Winchester pounded a fist on the table in fury.

"He's fine, Singer. I don't need you or anyone else telling me how to raise my damn kid."

"He's sick, John," but Bobby was cut off by John's angry growl.

"He is not sick. He's normal, he's as normal as the rest of them, Bobby."

"Dean needs to get better; there are better places for him." Now Bobby's voice was getting louder.

"You make it sound like he's dying. There is no better place than with his father. A boy needs his father to be right in this

world."

Bobby glared at John as the younger man realized what he had said.

"Damn it, Bobby, I didn't mean-"

"No, you did mean it, John. And a part of me agrees with ya, but you're hurting him right now. He's scared, and he's unhappy, and he needs more than you can give him."

"What can those quack psychologists give him that I can't?"

"Support, maybe? Acceptance of his condition?"

"There is no condition!"

"He thinks his Sam is alive, John. It's been eight years."

"Don't you think I know that? Don't you think I know that my wife and child are dead? But I have one son who isn't, and I am gonna make damn sure that I never lose him."

And then Dean tuned out the voices because they were scary, and Sam was crying. So Dean, being the good big brother he was, stroked Sam's hair and told him a bedtime story. About a knight in shining armor who saved a village from a fire breathing dragon with yellow eyes.

S

When they left Bobby's, John made rules for Dean. He told Dean that he was responsible for taking care of Sam, and for protecting him from everyone else. He also wasn't allowed to talk about Sam to anyone, because there was a bad man that wanted to hurt Sammy. That was why they moved around, he said, to protect Sam. Dean liked these rules.

Now, he could be with Sammy as much as he wanted, as long as Sam was a secret. He could talk to John about Sammy now, though; he told him how smart Sam was, smarter than Dean most of the time. He told him about Sam's puppy eyes, and silly long hair, and giggled over Sam's constant shortness.

Soon, John left Dean alone with Sammy more and more. He went out for his 'job' and they stayed in motels more often than not. But Dean was okay with it because it meant Sam was safe.

Dean told Sammy a lot of stories while his dad was away. Sammy didn't like the motels; he wanted to know why they weren't normal. Dean tried not to tell Sam about the bad man because he didn't want to scare him. But Sam persisted.

Eventually, Dean had to tell Sam where their dad was going. How he was saving people by hunting the scary things that lived in the closet.

So one night when John came home early, he heard one of Dean's stories to Sam. It was then that he knew Bobby was right. Dean needed

help, and John wasn't enough.

The Winchesters set out for the Singer Salvage Yard the next day. Dean was fourteen, Sam was ten.

S

The first time Castiel saw Dean Winchester, he thought he was an orderly.

The man was big, not in a domineering way. His blond hair was in the perfect state of planned disarray, and he wore a leather jacket that was slightly large on his frame.

Dean had met his eyes from across the room, and a wolfish grin had erupted on his face. It looked unnatural against the boyish freckles and leaf-green eyes.

"Hey, Angel," was Dean's opening line, and it had Castiel both blushing and slightly confused. He was fairly sure he didn't come close to resembling an angel, although he was dressed in the typical all-white orderly uniform.

"Hello."

Dean laughed, throwing in a wink. Castiel glanced self-consciously at his shoes, only to notice Dean wearing slippers. The blue, paper kind given to patients.

"Dean, I think you're late for group," a man with long brown hair and deep tan skin approached the two of them. Dean turned and his grin became innocent.

"Aww, come on, Dr. Sexy. I was just trying to get to know..." he paused and looked politely toward Castiel.

"Cas-Castiel," the orderly managed to croak. Dean's grin widened.

"Cas here. It was fun, right, Cas?"

Castiel had never had a shortened form of his name that he had enjoyed. His older brothers had often called him Cassie, so he was very against nicknames. But coming from Dean, it seemed nice, better somehow.

"I, um, yes. It was very enjoyable."

"That's wonderful, Dean. But you know the rules: no group, no lunch," the doctor chuckled good-naturedly. He shot Cas a look that said 'sorry for my friend he can be an idiot,' while placing a hand on Dean's shoulder.

"I think Cas here is worth going hungry."

"But today is burger day."

"Son of a bitch." Dean offered Castiel an apologetic shrug. "Guess I have to go then, beautiful. I'll catch you and those baby blues later."

Dr. Sexy, as Dean had introduced him, then waved to another orderly, a motherly woman whose nametag said 'Ellen.' She came and took Dean's arm and lead him away, chatting and laughing with the man as if they were family.

"Sorry about that. Dean is one of the staff favorites, but he's pretty flirtatious. He doesn't mean any harm by it, I promise you," the doctor assured Castiel.

"I see. Because he called you 'Dr. Sexy'?"

The man laughed, shaking his head.

"That's an old favorite of his. Apparently, it isn't customary for doctors to wear cowboy boots to work unless they happen to be in a soap opera."

Cas lowered his gaze and saw that the man was indeed wearing cowboy boots.

"You said a staff favoriteâ€¦|Is Dean a patient?"

"Yes, he is. He's been here since he was fourteen. That's all I can say on the matter, you know."

"Of course, I wasn't prying-"

"I know, Castiel. Go pick up your badge from the desk, and then I think we'll have you help Benny with covering the lunch shift."

"Alright, Doctorâ€¦|"

"Freidman. But Dean has basically everyone calling me Dr. Sexy around here, so that might be better."

"I'll keep that in mind, Dr. Freidman," Castiel said stoically.

"I think you'll be a good fit here, Mr. Novak. Welcome to the Bunkersville Psychiatric Facility."

S

_ "Someone looks happy."_

_ "You'll never believe it, Sammy, I saw an angel with the bluest eyes and the worst case of sex hair."_

_ "Dean, you're confusing reality with porn again," Sam said from his spot on the bed._

_ "Shut it, bitch."_

_ "Jerk."_

_ Sam looked up from his book to shoot his brother the bitchface. Dean laughed at the familiar sight._

_ "Come on, Sam, lunch time!"_

_ "What are we having?"_

_ "Burgers and fries."_

_ Sam made a face and Dean sighed._

_ "You really need to eat healthier, Dean," Sam put the book down and faced his brother._

_ "But Ellen made them," Dean whined. Sam visibly perked up._

_ "Ellen was in the kitchen today?"_

_ "Hell yeah."_

_ "What are we still doing here," Sam asked, leaping from the bed. Dean watched the massive giant that was his brother unfold and take over the space in the room._

_ "Watch the light-fixtures, gigantor. And try not to scare off Cas."_

_ "Ooh, the angel has a name."_

_ "Stow it or I'm leaving you here."_

_ Sam just laughed as he jogged down the hall ahead of Dean. Dean cursed and took off after him._

S

Cas was already regretting letting Benny talk him into wearing a hairnet. He regretted it more when Dean slid into the industrial-lit cafeteria.

Dean's power-slide was not seen as odd by anyone else, judging by the fact that none of the other patients concerned themselves with him.

"Hey, Dean," Jo smirked. Castiel had learned that she was the daughter of Ellen, a woman who volunteered here frequently, after seeing how well they had treated her husband during his brief stay.

"Hello, Jo," he said, grinning at her irritation over the rhyme. "Your mother was cooking, I assume?"

"Yes, but there's nothing here for the likes of you."

"And what would I be like, exactly."

"It's not fit to say around people who are eating."

"Ouch, you wound me, Jo. I thought we were friends."

"Wrong. But I may have saved you a burger," she said, presenting the coveted dish with a mock bow. Cas watched Dean's green eyes spark with pleasure, and felt a not altogether-unpleasant twist in his abdomen.

"And here I was thinking that you didn't care," Dean shot Jo a wink, and Cas recalled how Dean was a known flirt. His posture deflated slightly. Benny saw and gave him a consoling pat on the shoulder.

"If you're smitten with Dean already, I might have a way to help you," Benny drawled in the accent that Castiel found pleasant but was unable to place.

"I don't-I wouldn't-it isn't," he stammered, until he gave up as Benny laughed heartily.

"There ain't no rules against it, brother. Just gotta warn ya to be careful with him. He's more sensitive than he lets on."

"Here's what you do," the bigger man leaned near Castiel conspiratorially. "I'll let you serve today's dessert. It's Dean's favorite."

"I can't-" Cas saw the look that passed Benny's face and sighed. "Thank you."

Benny grinned and directed him to act as busboy until it was time for dessert to start.

S

When Dean came out of his burger trance, he took the time to admire Castiel's as-features_. Features only.

Sammy gave him a knowing look and scoffed.

"He seems like a nice guy, Dean. I'm surprised you've waited this long to make a move on him."

"Shut up, Sam. I'm working on it."

"Sure you are," was all he added before focusing on his burger once more. Dean shot an envious glare at Sam and his food. Then Castiel came to take his plate and he almost stopped breathing.

"Isn't God looking for you?"

"Excuse me?"

"I think he'd know if he were missing his cutest angel."

Cas's stubbled face adopted an adorable red tinge, and Dean smiled up at him. Cas gave a sheepish grin in return before moving on.

Sam snorted.

"Didn't I tell you to shut up?"

"Missing his cutest angel," his younger brother mocked. "Is that your best line?"

"It's called sticking with what works."

"I think it's called striking out."

Dean went back to ignoring his brother and watching Castiel. He imagined kissing those chapped lips, brushing his fingers through the dark, unruly hair

"Dessert!" Benny called, which had Dean off like a shot. Pie was important, and he had learned not to trust gathering it to Sam.
"It's cake; it's like pie."

Dean, glad for his slippery foot wear once again, slid easily into the front of the line.

"Benny! What did you cook up today?"

"Why don't you just come up and see, brother?"

Dean leaned into the counter as instructed, sniffing deeply. He faintly caught the whiff of cherries before something else caressed his nostrils. It smelled fresh and crisp, as if there were a mint-infused waterfall in existence.

Dean opened his eyes to find the most heavenly sight.

Castiel's blue eyes were round and warm, his smile shy but hopeful. And in his arms, a warm and oozing slice of beautiful cherry pie.
Alamode.

"He's my cherry pie," Dean murmured. Castiel, who was close enough to hear, blushed heavily. Dean couldn't help his similar blush.

S

"Yes, thank you, Dean," Castiel relished the name on his lips, before remembering he was supposed to hand Dean the pie.

He was relieved to find Dean in a similar state of mind, as it took a few seconds of silence and a breathy, "Alright, Sam," before he managed to vacate the line.

Castiel's brow furrowed in confusion, but it cleared up as Dean waved goodbye.

Benny gave him a smug look before passing him another plate to hand out. They passed out the pie until there was none left, and miraculously the line ended at exactly that point. Cas was surprised that Benny had made the perfect amount of pie for the lunch rush, before he decided that his day here was miraculous enough, and that he should just stop questioning things.

End
file.